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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9380
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHKS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 0281
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5156
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2679
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2136
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2776
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 001238

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: JAKARTA TO HOST CAPACITY-BUILDING CONFERENCE FOR
PALESTINIANS

REF: JAKARTA 518

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: Indonesia has announced that it plans to co-host with South Africa a ministerial-level capacity-building conference for Palestine, July 14-15. The conference--which would be held in Jakarta--aims to generate pledges of training, technical assistance and other forms of capacity-building for the Palestinian Authority in four main areas: agriculture, education, economic growth and health. The Indonesian organizers stress that the event is not a donors' conference and say they do not plan to invite Hamas officials. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) A FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) Secretary General Imron Gota--DEPLU's number-two official--publicly announce on June 20 that Indonesia would host a "Ministerial Meeting on Capacity-Building for Palestine" July 14-15 in Jakarta. Speaking to reporters, Gota pledged Indonesia's support for a Palestinian state that "will live peacefully side by side with its neighbors, including Israel."

3. (C) Indonesia announced the conference, to be co-sponsored by South Africa, during the November 2007 Annapolis Conference. The conference was originally slated for late March or early April but was postponed due to organizational difficulties and other issues (reftel). DEPLU contacts expect representatives from approximately 75 Asian and African (including Middle Eastern) countries to attend. The GO has not yet determined what role there might be for countries outside these regions, including the United States.

4. (C) Agus Salim, Deputy Director for Asia-Pacific and African Intra-Regional Cooperation at DEPLU, told Poloff on June 23 that the conference would focus on "practical issues" and avoid sensitive political matters. He also said conference organizers did not plan to invite officials from Hamas. They expect either Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmud Abbas or Prime Minister Salam Fayyad to lead the Palestinian delegation. He stressed that it was not a donors' conference, but a forum for cooperation on capacity-building.

5. (C) PALESTINIAN EMBASSY VIEW: Palestinian Authority officials here have high hopes for the conference. Palestinian DCM Nasser Wahab told Poloff that the PA had submitted approximately 90 proposals that they hoped

conference participants would pledge to support. The majority of these were in four key areas: agriculture, education, economic growth and health. One proposal, however, covered training for the Palestinian police, but this proposal was unlikely to be supported at the conference, he said. PA officials actually preferred that security-related assistance be provided by a European country, Wahab remarked.

16. (C) Wahab stressed that this was not a donors' conference and that there would be no pledges of financial assistance to the PA. Instead, participating countries would offer training, technical assistance, exchange programs and other forms of capacity building for the PA.

17. (C) GOI WANTS TO HELP: As noted, the conference follows from Indonesia's support for and participation in the Annapolis Process. The GOI clearly maintains a genuine desire to play a positive role in the Middle East Peace Process, but it is realistic about its influence. The conference is an opportunity for the GOI to show to both external and domestic audiences that it is acting constructively on an important international matter.

HUME